

'PRACTICE BALL' GOAL COUNTED

Sports Mail Special Report

WYCOMBE hardly deserved a point in their Isthmian League tussle at Enfield, and the goal which put them 2-1 up was one of the most controversial at the ground for years.

Enfield: Mitchell; Sedgely, Neale; Mendum, Kingsland, Cantwell; R. Thomas, Broomfield, Burrige, Day, Broad.

Wycombe: Bunting; Lewis, Pullin; Beck, Roystone, Gale; Page, Gallagher, D. Thomas, Horseman, Hodges.

Referee: E. W. Ruck (Ilford).

For their first league visit to Isthmian newcomers Enfield, Wycombe Wanderers brought in 18-year-old Billy Gallagher—making his senior debut—and 21-year-old Mick Page. They replaced Len Worley and David Bassett, both injured.

Enfield forced a corner which Bunting caught well, and Wycombe were again in trouble when a long ball bounced awkwardly but Broomfield passed across the goal face.

Roystone did well to block a Burrige shot after good work by Day.

With both sides playing the 4-2-4 system, the pace was rather slow with Enfield doing most of the forcing.

JUST WIDE

When Wycombe did attack, Gallagher failed to connect with a Hodges' cross by inches only, and a Gale pile-driver passed just wide of the post. Then, as Enfield broke away, Bunting had to push a shot from Burrige over the bar.

After Lewis deflected a shot for a corner Enfield had a scare, but Mitchell beat Horseman to a through pass.

Enfield took the lead after 29 minutes through ROY THOMAS when Bunting failed to hold his shot after appearing to have it covered.

Broomfield toe-ended an easy chance high over the bar, and as Enfield pressed harder Bunting saved well from Day.

In Wycombe's attack, Mick Page was showing up well with some excellent prompting from Dave Thomas. But Hodges on the other wing had little of the ball.

Half-time: Enfield 1, Wycombe 0.

Enfield started the second half pressing hard. It was Wycombe, however, who went closest when Horseman slipped past Kingsland, but Mitchell dived to smother his shot.

A long centre from Broomfield bounced against the bar before Bunting managed to gather it and Wycombe had another escape seconds later when Day headed into the net but was just offside.

After 65 minutes Wycombe drew level when Gallagher sent a low pass across the goalmouth. Pullin and HORSEMAN both went for the ball, but it was the inside forward who put it into the net.

Five minutes later Wycombe went ahead. Goalkeeper Mitchell hit a goal-kick straight to Page, the winger squared the ball across and HODGES hit it in.

Enfield then claimed the ball Mitchell kicked was the spare one and he had only tried to kick it off the field. The referee did not agree, however, and the goal stood. Almost on time, Enfield equalised when R. THOMAS shot first-time into the net.

RESULT:

ENFIELD 2
WYCOMBE WAN. 2

WYCOMBE'S PAGE EARNS POINT

Enfield 2 Wycombe 2

BOTH sides finished weakly in a poor first half, of which the highlight was the powerful shot with which Thomas gave Enfield the lead.

Wycombe, much faster and more purposeful in the second period, equalised when Horseman hit in a square pass from Gallagher, an 18-year-old inside-man playing his first game for Wycombe.

There was a shock for Enfield when Mitchell, their 'keeper, thinking that the referee's instructions were to resume play with the match ball, which had been lost, kicked the substitute ball to the touchline.

It was collected there by Page, Wycombe's right-winger, and the right-winger, and the referee allowed play to proceed for Hodges to put Wycombe in front from Page's centre.

Roystone, Wycombe's centre half, kept a sound grip on Burrige, the home centre.

Broomfield, Enfield's inside right, missed a great chance to equalise as his team stepped up pressure, and it was not until two minutes from time that Thomas brilliantly first-timed Broad's centre past Bunting.